

down. Roche paused in his speech, drew from his pocket and displayed to the House a handful of pistol bullets. He said: "I have here some pills that are warranted to cure a cough in five minutes. If any gentleman opposite feels certain that he cannot rid himself of his cough instantly, I shall be happy to relieve him." It is recorded that Sir Boyle finished his speech without further molestation.

In those days Norris' coffee-house near the Royal Exchange and Lucas' coffee-house on Cork Hill adjacent to the Castle were the resorts of the beaux, the wits and the politicians. An old writer tells how these places usually were crowded by the city beaux, dressed in all that was fine and gay, with prim queues, Marshal Eugene wigs, bulged waistcoats, Steinkirk breast ruffles and gold clocks in their silk stockings. They read the newspapers, sipped coffee, strutted about the coffee-house, and promptly challenged anyone who dared brush against them. Duels were fought frequently in the yards behind the coffee-houses; the company flocked to the windows to see that the laws of honor—the "Commandments," as they were termed—were strictly observed, and to bet upon the survivor. In the mornings the bucks strutted up and down, with long trains to their gowns—and woe betide the person of inferior rank who accidentally touched these trains.

A plain man, one day crossing a room in Norris' accidentally touched with his foot the train of a buck named Sheehy. Sheehy's sword was out instantly; the other man drew his small tuck, which he carried as an appendage to dress, without ever intending or knowing how to use it. Sheehy, however, pressed him back, drove him against the wall, and prepared with a lunge to pin him to it. Now this Sheehy was notorious for his skill in fencing, and had killed or wounded several adversaries. On this occasion, however, his terrified opponent, in an impulse of self-preservation, sprang within Sheehy's point and pierced him to the heart. The killing of Sheehy had a salutary effect upon the bucks.

That part of Phoenix Park known as the Fifteen Acres, and so-called because its area is much less than fifteen acres, was a favorite place for fighting duels. And it is recorded how a second, who happened to be a lawyer, wrote once challenging an offending party to meet the offended "in the Fifteen Acres, be the same more or less."

The lawyers not only frequently fought duels, but laid down the law for them. Lord Clonmel, Lord Chief Justice at the end of the eighteenth century, sitting in the Court of King's Bench, laid down the following: "There are cases where it may be, and when it is, prudent for a man to fight a duel: cases in which the law does not afford him redress, cases of persevering malignity, cases of injured honor, cases of wounded spirit—and a wounded spirit who can bear? In cases of this complexion the court will never interfere with its discretionary authority against a man. But in all those cases where a man seeks to bring himself

into notice by provoking a combat, when an aspiring upstart seeks to put himself on a level with, or to humble, his superior; cases where there has been no provocation, no sufficient ground to force a man of prudence to have recourse to the *ultima ratio*; or cases, as frequently happens in this country, where a man seeks to decide a contested right or a claim of property by this sort of wager of battle—in all these cases the court will lend its discretionary arm, according to the nature of his transgression."

At a later period, when the law had narrowed in its spirit, Judge Fletcher, in trying for murder, at the Sligo Assizes, a man named Fenton who had killed another in a duel, put to the jury the following: "Gentlemen, it is my business to lay down the law to you, and I will. The law says the killing of a man in a duel is murder, and therefore in the discharge of my duty, I am bound to tell you it is murder. But I tell you at the same time a fairer duel than this I never heard of in the course of my life." Fenton was acquitted.

One of the most remarkable duels of the dueling age in Ireland was one that was not fought, in County Cork toward the beginning of the last century. A Franco-Irish chevalier named De Lacy arrived in Cork from the gay capital where he had been bred, and where he had, or had not, won a fame (which preceded him to Cork) for dexterity with both pistol and sword, for readiness to fight, and for the hosts of enemies that he had put *hors de combat*. Chevalier De Lacy was fondled by Cork society—he was the pet of the women, and the envied of all men. He bore himself haughtily, superciliously, almost arrogantly, so that many wished but feared to fight him. There was a certain harum-scarum fellow who had been christened Seaton Fitzgerald, but whom the South of Ireland with much justification had come to call "Satan" Fitzgerald, who feared neither man nor the devil, to whom life was one great joke, and who came into Cork when the name and the fame of the chevalier were on everyone's lips.

"Who the deuce is the scamp?" he queried. "You'd better put that question to the scamp himself," was the reply.

"Faith, and I'll do that," said Fitzgerald, chuckling.

He got his opportunity a few nights later, when at a great ball given by the Mayor of Cork Fitzgerald found De Lacy present, and as usual the cynosure. At a favorable opportunity, in view of the whole ball-room, he waked up to De Lacy; slapped him familiarly on the back, and said: "Hello, De Lacy, you are welcome to Cork! But I'd be obliged if you would tell me who the deuce you are, where the deuce you come from, how the deuce you are here, and what the deuce you want anyway?"

De Lacy at first was fairly flabbergasted at the fellow's impudence, then he changed colors in wrath, and put his hand upon his sword; but remembering where he was, turned upon his heel and walked away. Having made inquiries, and finding that Fitzgerald was of gentle blood, he sent him a challenge. Fitzgerald consented to fight him in a

certain field on the outskirts of the city on the following Monday morning, on condition that they both fought with swords upon horseback, and that they rode into the field from opposite ends as the near-by church clock struck six, and that they charged one another instantly, dispensing with seconds and other formalities.

De Lacy consented.

The news of the coming fight of course ran round the country like wild-fire, and such a sensation was it that hundreds arrived upon the ground the night before in order to get a good position. The country people were trooping in throughout the night, and when De Lacy rode into the field on the stroke of six in the morning he found that there were many thousands in attendance. As Fitzgerald did not ride in at the same moment, De Lacy at first imagined that he had been fooled. But he was not long left to his fancy, for the next instant he observed a tremendous commotion at the opposite end of the field, where a lane-way led into it, and almost immediately with clattering, clashing, clanging, banging, enough to waken the dead, Fitzgerald, waving a sword above his head, dashed into the field, mounted upon a bony, starved, but still spirited old race-horse, which was hung and strung all over with tin cans, tin pans and tin kettles and every household utensil that ever left a tinker's hands.

De Lacy for a moment was paralyzed. Fitzgerald, putting spurs to his sorry old steed, made a dash at him. As with a clattering and clanging he came on, the animal which De Lacy rode, getting frightened, turned his head, and attempted to dash wildly away. A great roar went up from the thousands around the field. Fitzgerald chased De Lacy, who neither could steady nor quiet his horse, round and round the field, and always when he took a short cut to get in front of De Lacy's animal, the latter turned his head and tore off in the opposite direction. "Won't you stop, you coward you, and show me some fight?" Fitzgerald would roar after De Lacy, to the ferocious delight of the multitude.

At length De Lacy acquired enough control over his maddened animal to induce it in its wild career to bound out of the field by the lane by which Fitzgerald had entered. Fitzgerald pursued him out, but was soon far out-distanced. The roaring crowd, however, got up with Fitzgerald, took him off the horse, and carried him into and through Cork on their shoulders, his steed with all its clanging decorations, and on its head a laurel crown, placed there by some wag, being led in front of the procession.

The gay chevalier left Cork without saying farewell to his friends, and "Satan" Fitzgerald, without intending it, did more to discredit dueling than if sermons against the practice had been showering from Heaven for a year and a day. Thousands of duels had occurred in Ireland before that event, and many, of course, occurred in it after, but the duel which Chevalier De Lacy did not fight with Seaton Fitzgerald was an Irish duel *par excellence*.

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THE OLD SCHOOL-HOUSE LANE

By W. H. Pierce

A dusty white road and a rocky hill
Lead down from a breezy plain,
And just at the foot, by the rambling mill,
Starts the winding old school-house lane;
And a barefoot boy with a bright tin pail
And a hat with a battered brim
Is loitering along like a tardy snail,
For Nature is calling to him.

By the big old elm is a bubbling spring
Whose waters are deep and cool;
And it speaks to him like a living thing
As he bends o'er the limpid pool.
A sigh of content stirs his boyish breast
As he flushes his thirsty throat,
And a floating leaf, as he lies at rest,
Turns into a fairy boat.

Still farther along is the woodchuck hole—
Oh, a wonderful place is that!
To him and Tige 'twas the glorified goal
Of many a fierce combat.
As he turns away there comes to his eyes
A softer and merrier light,
For up on the hill where the sunshine lies
There quavers the call "Bob White."



In this thorn-apple-tree is the thrush's nest;
The squirrels are in that oak;
And here's where he fought with Billy West,
The day that his nose got broke;
And here is the brook where the minnows stay;
And the bullfrogs croak in the reeds.
Walk softly, for over across the way
Is the field where the black bull feeds.

Up there on the ridge the chinkapins grow,
And the chestnuts and hickories too;
Off there was the end of the bright rainbow,
Where the hills turn dim and blue;
And some day he and Tige will start
To look for the pot of gold
That is hidden there—and his boyish heart
Beats high at the prospect bold.

Look out for Jones's big gander here,
And the terrible Southdown ram,
For these engender a trembling fear
That it takes a high fence to calm;
And there is the teacher in front of the door,
With that stinging old two-foot rule,
And she's asking herself a hundred times o'er
How a boy can be late at school.